

REMARKS

The application has been amended as needed so as to place it in condition for allowance at the time of the next Official Action.

In the Official Action of September 22, 2004, the Primary Examiner had kindly indicated that claims 23 and 24 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form so as to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Similarly, claims 16 and 17 were indicated to be allowed.

By the present amendment, it will be seen that the allowable subject matter of claim 23 has been incorporated into independent claim 14, thereby vitalizing and rendering independent claim 14, as currently amended, allowable. Dependent claims 15, 19 and 21 have been amended so as to address a potential antecedent basis problem. Claims 22 and 23 have been canceled without prejudice.

It should be pointed out that although the allowable subject matter of claim 23 has been incorporated into independent claim 14, applicants preserve the right to pursue the subject matter of former claim 14, in a continuing application.

In view of the present amendment and the foregoing remarks, therefore, it is believed that this application has been placed in condition for allowance. Entry of the present

amendment, reconsideration and allowance are accordingly earnestly solicited.

In the event that there are any questions relating to this amendment or to the application in general, it would be appreciated if the Examiner would telephone the undersigned attorney concerning such questions so that the prosecution of this application may be expedited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

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